

Message Text

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FM AMCONSUL KADUNA
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C O N F I D E N T I A L KADUNA 1036

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: PINT, PEPR, NI, LY, MR
SUBJECT: THE LIBYAN CONNECTION

REF: LAGOS 8772 (NOTAL)

1. ALHAJI ISA KAITA, TREASURER OF THE NATIONAL ISLAMIC ORGANIZATION, REVIEWED LIBYAN CONTACTS WITH THE MUSLIM COMMUNITY IN NIGERIA IN AN AUGUST 7 CONVERSATION. KAITA SAID THAT A GROUP OF "LEARNED MALLAMS" FROM LIBYA HAD VISITED TWO TO THREE MONTHS AGO. ALTHOUGH OFFICIALLY ON A PURELY RELIGIOUS VISIT, THEY HAD COME TO OFFER LIBYAN FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE TO THE NIGERIAN MUSLIM COMMUNITY. KAITA STRESSED THAT AS REPRESENTATIVES OF THE NIGERIAN MUSLIM COMMUNITY "WE" HAD TO BE CAREFUL IN OUR DISCUSSIONS SO AS NOT TO INVOLVE THE TITULAR LEADERS--THE SULTAN OF SOKOTO AND THE SHEHU OF BORNO--IN FUTURE DIFFICULTIES. THE NIGERIAN HAD AGREED ONLY TO ACCEPT HELP FOR A MUSLIM NEWSPAPER WHICH WOULD BE PRINTED IN ENGLISH AND ARABIC AND WOULD CARRY THE "TRUTH" FOR MUSLIMS. THIS PROJECT IS APPARENTLY STILL UNDER CONSIDERATION. KAITA ADDED THAT HE "KNOWS" THAT IF "WE" REQUEST
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ASSISTANCE FOR OTHER ACTIVITIES THEY WILL PROVIDE IT.

2. WITHOUT MENTIONING SPECIFICS I QUESTIONED KAITA ABOUT OTHER LIBYAN CONNECTIONS IN NIGERIA AND HE NOTED THAT THERE IS A PAKISTANI MUSLIM SECT, HAMDIA (PHONETIC), WHICH IS NOW BANNED IN PAKISTAN, BUT QUITE ACTIVE IN SOUTHERN NIGERIA. HE SAID THAT THE LIBYANS PROVIDE

FINANCIAL SUPPORT TO THIS ORGANIZATION IN ITS EFFORTS HERE.

3. KAITA ALSO NOTED THAT THERE WERE MANY LIBYANS LIVING IN THE "SYRIAN QUARTER" OF KANO. SOME HAD BEEN THERE FOR TWO HUNDRED YEARS, OTHERS FOR A RELATIVELY SHORT PERIOD, AND SOME STILL HAD FAMILY TIES IN LIBYA. FOR INSTANCE, HIS STEP-DAUGHTER IS MARRIED TO A LIBYAN AND LIVES IN TRIPOLI. SHE MET HER HUSBAND WHEN HE WAS LIVING WITH A RELATIVE IN LAGOS WHO WAS A MINISTER IN THE BALEWA GOVERNMENT.

4. KAITA ALSO SAID THERE WERE SOME "ALMOST FANATICAL" MUSLIM SECTS PROSELYTIZING IN NIGERIA FROM MAURITANIA AND OTHER AFRICAN COUNTRIES.

5. COMMENT: KAITA WAS QUITE FRANK IN DISCUSSING LIBYAN ACTIVITIES IN NIGERIA AND WE BELIEVE THAT HIS DESCRIPTION IS A FAIR PICTURE OF THE "OFFICIAL UNOFFICIAL" RELATIONSHIP. ALTHOUGH HE SAID THERE WERE NO OTHER LIBYAN CONNECTIONS HERE, HE TWICE REFERRED TO THE LIBYAN WILLINGNESS TO PROVIDE FUNDS, IF ASKED, LEADING US TO WONDER WHETHER HE KNOWS OF OR SUSPECTS OTHER MORE COVERT LIBYAN ACTIVITIES AMONG THE MUSLIM COMMUNITY.
LAKE

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